California State Transportation Agency Secretary Brian Kelly Bay Bridge Opening Ceremony Monday, September 2, 2013 3:30 p.m. Oakland, California Remarks as Delivered

Thank you, Steve. I am very honored to be here today and as Steve depicted in the video I have been associated with this project for the better part of my professional career, throughout 18 years as a staff person in the state Senate and more recently in the Brown Administration over the past 19 months.

Over those 18 years, this project has had quite an effect on me like it has on everyone else associated with it—it has at times inspired me, challenged me, frustrated me, and today after seeing the final product, it impresses me with its beauty, grace and strength.

There are thousands of men and women who gave much of themselves to see this project come to fruition. As I reflect on today's accomplishment, it is their work, their creativity, their resolve, and in many cases, their friendship that I want to spend a moment honoring.

First, of course on this day you cannot let a moment like this pass without honoring the men and women from the labor community who actually did the work to construct this project. Please join me in honoring their work and thanking them for their invaluable contribution.

Second, he has just been so great to work with and provided me with so much council and guidance over the course of this project. I have to just tip my hat to Dr. Brian Maroney. Dr. Maroney is enthusiastic, he's energetic, he's passionate about what he does. In my view he is a first-class public servant, and it has been my highest honor to get to know him as we worked toward this day. Thank you, Brian.

To my friend Steve Heminger and his colleague Randy
Rentschler at the MTC Bay Area Toll Authority. The three of us
have been partners on this project from the beginning. We worked
well together navigating some of the more difficult political terrain
over the years and today that work pays off. Steve and Randy,
thank you.

It was mentioned that I spent some time with state political leaders over the years. There are a few that I want to particularly

acknowledge because at very crucial moments in the life of the project they really came through for the Bay Area. I want to just spend a moment listing folks who have taught me a great deal over the years and again had a great influence on this project: Bill Lockyer, Quentin Kopp who is here, Former Governor Pete Wilson, Former State Senate Pro Tem John Burton, Assemblymember John Dutra who is here today, My former boss Senate Pro Tem Don Perata, Senator Loni Hancock who was instrumental in passage of AB 144, and Governor Gray Davis. There are others of course, but your collective leadership has made this day possible. Thank you all.

Of course there are also several heads of the Department of Transportation who have been associated with this project, from project selection and the original decision to construct a new bridge throughout many management challenges and political challenges in Sacramento and a few come to mind of great partners along the way: James Van Loben Sels of the Wilson Administration, Jeff Morales, Will Kempton, and my colleague today and friend Malcolm Dougherty.

I've learned a thing or two from Steve Heminger and so I'm also going to thank my current boss. I want thank Governor Brown for

his leadership over the course of the last several months. This project hit a bit of a bumpy road you may have read or heard about associated with some bolts on the bridge. During all of that time the Governor displayed first a steady focus on safety and a wisdom to let engineers make the decision of when the bridge is safe. I appreciate that kind of direction. Thank you, Governor.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank the people of the Bay Area. The journey to this day has not been an easy one. There have been great challenges in moving this project forward—some construction, some administrative, and some political. But through it all, the people of this region have displayed great, great patience. And tonight, we reward that patience with a magnificent structure that will serve this area for generations to come.

It is true that nothing worth doing is easy. And this bridge—everybody knows—has not been easy, but it is certainly worthwhile.

It enhances the beauty of the Bay Area, already among the most beautiful places on earth, while providing its travelers with safe passage between two great cities. Over the course of time, we will think less about the challenges and controversies that surrounded this project and instead of all the people associated with it and the human spirit, ingenuity, and creativity that built this bridge.

I will always regard this new bridge as a very human triumph.

Thank you very much.